

The President's Radio Address *November 4, 1995*

Good morning. What I have to say today is clear and simple: Under the cover of balancing the budget, the Republican Congress is going after the essential environmental protections that have guaranteed the health and safety of all Americans for a long time now, and I am determined to stop them.

I'm for balancing the budget; it's part of my vision to keep the American dream alive for all Americans in the 21st century. It's a core part of our strategy to promote economic growth, commonsense Government, and the mainstream values of responsibility, opportunity, work, family, and community.

But protecting our environment is a fundamental community value for all Americans, and it can't be sacrificed to balance the budget. Because we cherish our children, we want to be sure the water they drink and the food they eat won't make them sick. Because we honor our parents, we want the air they breathe to be clean so they can live long and healthy lives and not be housebound by smog. Because we believe that what God created we must not destroy, each of us has a sacred obligation to pass on a clean planet to future generations. For nearly three decades, all Americans have agreed we must do what we have to to protect our environment. And America is cleaner and healthier because of it.

Since our environmental laws were put in place, toxic emissions by factories have been cut in half. Lead levels in children's blood have dropped 70 percent. Lake Erie, for example, once declared dead, is now teeming with fish. But all this progress is now at risk. In the last few months, a small army of lobbyists for polluters has descended on Capitol Hill, mounting a full-scale assault on our environmental and public health protections. And this Congress has actually allowed these lobbyists to sit down and rewrite important environmental laws to weaken our safeguards. And now they're trying to use the budget bill to further weaken these protections. It's an incredible fact that this Republican budget actually singles out the environment and its protections for extra cuts.

This budget will mean dirtier water, more smog, more illness, and a diminished quality

of life. Here's how. It's plain that there are two ways to legalize pollution: You can change the laws or just stop enforcing them by firing the enforcers. The pollution lobby knows it could never repeal half our environmental protections, so the Republican budget cuts the resources for environmental enforcement in half. Quite simply, it just pulls the cop from the environmental beat. The budget also would cut off money now going to communities to invest to keep their drinking water clean. And the cuts mean that toxic waste cleanups across America would slow to a crawl.

The Republican leadership even tried to slip 17 special interest provisions into the spending bill, loopholes that would end enforcement of the Clean Air and the Clean Water Acts, let more dangerous arsenic into our drinking water, allow raw sewage on our beaches. I'm happy to report that earlier this week, a bipartisan majority of the House, on the third try, rejected the efforts of the Republican leadership. But this fight isn't over.

There's another important issue here, too. There's nothing more American than the idea that citizens have the right to know what's happening to them. But this budget tries to roll back the law that gives people the right to know what toxic chemicals are being released into their neighborhoods. So I've acted, issuing a pollution prevention Executive order to limit the damage of their efforts to deprive citizens of the right to know. But this fight isn't over yet, either.

This budget also treats our Nation's great and precious store of public lands as a platform for destruction. The Republican budget, for example, would give oil companies the right to drill in the last unspoiled Arctic wilderness in Alaska. And it allows a giveaway of mining rights to companies at a fraction of their worth. Just recently, a law on the books since 1872 that I am trying hard to change forced the Government to sell minerals worth \$1 billion to a private company for \$275. That is taxpayer robbery, and it's going to keep right on happening under the Republican budget.

Just think of it: The Republican budget proposes to raise taxes on working families with

incomes of less than \$27,000, to increase the cost of college loans and cut the number of college scholarships, but they're determined to keep giving away \$1 billion worth of minerals on Government land for \$275.

Well, I've got bad news for the lobbyists and their allies. We don't need more pollution to balance the budget. We don't need dirtier water to close the deficit. If Congress sends me a budget that guts environmental protection, that protects polluters, not the public, I will veto it. As President, it is my duty to protect our environment, and on my watch, America will not be for sale.

On the other hand, we do have to be vigilant to make sure environmental protection doesn't become a tangle of redtape and bureaucracy, so we're stripping away thousands of pages of unnecessary rules and regulations and changing the way we protect the environment. Instead of a long list of do's and don'ts, we're telling responsible businesses, if you can meet the tough pollution goals, you figure out how to do it as cheaply and efficiently as you can. That's

the way to cut regulation without hurting public health.

After all, America's families don't care much about the rules and regulations. They look at the results, at a son who comes home from a playground with a rash from playing near an industrial site or a daughter with asthma, simply because she breathed the air.

My fellow Americans, let's never forget: The decisions we make today will live on long after we're gone. I don't think we Americans have lost our sense of the past or our dedication to the future. We're balancing the budget in a way that will be good for future generations. That means that in balancing the budget, we have to preserve the planet—clean air, clean water, safe food, a decent environment—for those future generations, too.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:57 p.m. on November 3 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 4.

Statement on the Shooting of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel

November 4, 1995

I am outraged at the news of this attempt on the life of Yitzhak Rabin, a great leader for

peace and a good friend. I join all Americans in prayers for his recovery.

Remarks on the Death of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel

November 4, 1995

The world has lost one of its greatest men, a warrior for his nation's freedom and now a martyr for his nation's peace.

To Leah Rabin and her children, Hillary and I send our love and our prayers. To the people of Israel, I want you to know that the hearts and prayers of all Americans are with you. Just as America has stood by you in moments of crisis and triumph, so now we all stand by you in this moment of grieving and loss.

For half a century, Yitzhak Rabin risked his life to defend his country. Today, he gave his life to bring it a lasting peace. His last act,

his last words were in defense of that peace he did so much to create. Peace must be and peace will be Prime Minister Rabin's lasting legacy.

Tonight, the land for which he gave his life is in mourning. But I want the world to remember what Prime Minister Rabin said here at the White House barely one month ago, and I quote: "We should not let the land flowing with milk and honey become a land flowing with blood and tears. Don't let it happen."

Now it falls to us, all those in Israel, throughout the Middle East, and around the world who